

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CANADIAN CANDIDACY FOR WORLD FOOD PROGRAM EXECUTIVE
DIRECTORSHIP

REF: USUN 0462

1. CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO RECEIVED INSTRUCTION OVER WEEK-END TO INFORM FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA OF CANADIAN NOMINATION OF CARSON NATHANIEL VOGEL, CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD, TO BE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WORLD FOOD PROGRAM. CANADIAN CHARGE AND CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO DID SO ON FEBRUARY 10, AND CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE ANNOUNCED NOMINATION TO GENEVA GROUP IN ROME LATER THAT DAY. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, SHE INDICATED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN ROME WILL BE INFORMED. SHE DID NOT EXPLICITLY ASK FOR SUPPORT OF GENEVA GROUP COUNTRIES.

2. CANADIAN CANDIDATE'S PROSPECTS ARE PROBLEMATIC. CANADA HAS RECENTLY BEEN FORTHCOMING AND GENEROUS IN WORLD FOOD PROGRAM. VOGEL'S PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL CREDENTIALS ARE EXCELLENT, ACCORDING TO SOURCES HERE (ALTHOUGH HIS PERIODS OF WORK FOR PRIVATE GRAIN TRADERS MAY NOT GO OVER WELL WITH SOME LDC'S). FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WAS ADDEKE BOERMA OF NETHERLANDS, LATER FAO

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DIRECTOR-GENERAL UNTIL END OF 1975. SECOND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HAS BEEN FRANCISCO AQUINO OF EL SALVADOR, WHO TRIED FOR FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL POST BUT RAN THIRD AFTER EDOUARD SAOUMA OF LEBANON AND ARTHUR HOPPER OF CANADA. AQUINO HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL LEAVE IN MID-MAY 1976, WHEN HIS TERM EXPIRES. IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT SAOUMA OFFERED AQUINO TWO MORE YEARS IN POST AND AQUINO DECLINED, BUT IT IS COMMONLY RECOGNIZED HERE THAT THIS WAS FACE-SAVING MOVE, SINCE ANIMOSITY BETWEEN TWO MEN FROM FAO ELECTION IS WELL KNOWN. SOME SOURCES HERE, INCLUDING HIGHLY PLACED SOURCES IN WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRY CANDIDATE TO GAIN POST THIS TIME. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO, HOWEVER, IS OF CONTRARY OPINION, FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA, WHO SHARES POWER OF APPOINTMENT WITH UN SECRETARY GENERAL, HARBORS ANIMOSITY TOWARD CANADIANS FROM HOPPER'S RIVAL CANDIDACY, AND HAS THUS FAR NOT RESPONDED TO SOME OF HIS CLOSE ADVISERS' COUNSEL TO MEND HIS BRIDGES WITH CANADA. SAOUMA HAS TOLD SOME PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES HERE THAT HE WISHES TO INTEGRATE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM INTO FAO, AND PLACE IT UNDER AN FAO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL. CONSULTATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN CONDUCTED IN PAST WFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS AND SAOUMA PROBABLY BELIEVES THAT HE RATHER THAN UN SYG SHOULD HAVE PRIMARY SAY, INASMUCH AS WORLD FOOD PROGRAM IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON FAO ADMINISTRATIVELY AND IS IN MANY RESPECTS SUBORDINATED TO FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL. SAOUMA IS CLOSELY TIED WITH GROUP-77, AND PROBABLY WOULD THINK IN TERMS OF LDC NATIONAL. WE CANNOT ASSESS UN SYG'S VIEW FROM HERE, OF COURSE, BUT DOUBT HE WOULD PRESS FOR CANADIAN CANDIDATE IN FACE OF STRONG OPPOSITION FROM SAOUMA.

3. ALTHOUGH CANADA HAS NOT ASKED FOR U.S. SUPPORT FOR VOGEL CANDIDACY, CANADIAN ANNOUNCEMENT RAISES PROBLEM WITH RESPECT TO U.S. CONSULTATION WITH FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL CONCERNING WFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT. UK REPRESENTATIVE HAS INFORMED HIS DEVELOPED COUNTRY COLLEAGUES THAT UK GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED TO FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA THAT IT BELIEVES GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE CONSULTED REGARDING WFP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO RECOMMENDS THAT IF WE DO CONSULT WITH SAOUMA ABOUT APPOINTMENT, WE INDICATE THAT WE WOULD CONSIDER VOGEL EXCELLENT CHOICE, BUT ALSO INDICATE, DEPENDING UPON TURN TAKEN IN TALKS, THAT WE HAVE NOT ENDORSED VOGEL'S NOMINATION AND THAT WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING CONSULTED ABOUT OTHER CANDIDATES

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SAOUMA MAY HAVE IN MIND, SINCE WE BELIEVE IT IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE IN PROGRAM SUCH AS WFP THAT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NOT ONLY BE HIGHLY CAPABLE BUT ALSO HAVE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH DONOR AND RECIPIENT COUNTRIES. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS AS TO POSITION TO BE TAKEN HERE ON VOGEL NOMINATION, EITHER AT SAOUMA'S INITIATIVE OR OURS. ALSO SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS VOGEL NOMINATION DURING SAOUMA'S TALKS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 24.VOLPE

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